

Jordan Pumps

By Carl Mellor

The Pumps at the mouth of the Jordan River is the World's largest Water Pumps. They stabilize the flow of the Jordan River. In 1900 and 1901, a severe drought shrank the Jordan River to only 25% of its normal flow.

Archibald Gardner, the West Jordan miller depended on the River for water power to operate his mill. His son James was superintendent of the Lehi Sugar Factory. Together they convinced the local water users that constructing pumps would equalize and control the flow of the river. They were right.

When the pumps were installed, it was possible to add thousands of acres of new farming land in Salt Lake Valley. Initially, four forty-eight inch pumps delivered four hundred cubic feet of water per second. In 1905, another pump was installed and two more in 1907.

A sixty inch pump was installed with 1,600 gallons per second capacity. When in full operation, the plant was delivering seven hundred million gallons of water every twenty-four hours. At that time it was considered the largest pumping plant in the world. In 1920 new construction doubled the plant's capacity